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PAPERS
IN
AGRICULTURE.

No. I.

FRUIT-GATHERER.

The sum of FIVE POUNDS was presented to Mr. CHARLES BUSH, of 65, Southampton Street, Camberwell, for a Fruit-Gatherer, which has been placed in the Society's Repository.

THE best fruit is generally to be found at the top of the tree, where it is most exposed to fresh air and light; but such fruit, especially if at the end of long slender sprays, is not easily gathered by hand, and if beaten or shaken down is commonly injured by the fall. For gathering such select fruit, instruments of various kinds have been invented, and some have already been published by the Society. It is, perhaps, not easy to contrive an instrument which shall fulfil all the required conditions; but Mr. Bush's contrivance has some points of novelty about it, and is therefore submitted to the notice of the public.

h (marked by mistake *g* in the engraving) is an open net hanging from a jointed steel frame, of which the piece *aa* is welded to the toothed quadrant *d*. This quadrant is inserted in a notch in the brass ferrule

which terminates the rod or pole *ff*, and moves on the centre-pin *e*. At *g* a spring catch is inserted, which dropping into the interval between any two adjacent teeth of the quadrant, allows as many angular variations in the position of the jointed frame as there are teeth in the quadrant. *bc bc* are two flat blades, the interior edge of each of which is ground sharp; they move on the centre-pin *c*, like the upper half of a pair of scissors: *ba ba* are two bent pieces jointed at *bb* to the cutting blades and at *aa* with the piece so called in the foregoing part of the description. A spring is placed under the piece *aa*, which bearing on the short ends of *ba* (those namely which project beyond *a* towards *e*), tend to separate the ends *bb* from each other, and consequently to keep open the cutting edges *bc*.

In order to use this instrument, first, let the most convenient angular position be given to the jointed frame by means of the toothed quadrant and spring catch; then raise the pole so that the fruit shall hang within the net, its stalk being between the blades. On drawing down the pole very gently the blades will take a firm gripe of the stalk, which, if the fruit is ripe, parts from the spray, and the fruit falls into the net.

